



NRC NEWS

U.S. NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

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No. III-04-049

November 9, 2004

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NRC TO MEET WITH FIRSTENERGY ON NUCLEAR PLANT PERFORMANCE

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission staff will meet with FirstEnergy Nuclear Operating Company officials on Tuesday, November 16, in Painesville, Ohio, to discuss the performance of FirstEnergy's three nuclear power plants.

The discussion will focus on how the company will deal with challenges resulting from the two-year shutdown at the Davis-Besse Nuclear Plant in Oak Harbor, Ohio, the degraded performance at the Perry Nuclear Plant in Perry, Ohio, and maintaining adequate performance at the Beaver Valley Nuclear Power Plant near Shippingport, Pa.

The meeting will be held at 6 p.m. at the Renaissance Quail Hollow Resort, 11080 Concord-Hambden Road, in Painesville. The public is invited to observe the business portion of the meeting and will have an opportunity to make comments and ask questions of the NRC staff before the meeting is adjourned. The staff will also be available after the meeting for informal discussions with the public.

"Even though FirstEnergy's nuclear plants are operating safely, two of the three plants face performance issues that need to be addressed. We expect to hear from utility officials how they intend to continue improving performance at Davis-Besse, address performance issues at Perry, and make sure that performance at Beaver Valley does not decline," said James Caldwell, NRC Regional Administrator.

Davis-Besse was shut down from February 16, 2002, until March 8, 2004, due to the corrosion damage to the reactor vessel head. The NRC established a special panel to coordinate the agency's response to the corrosion damage and other safety system and staff performance problems. The panel will continue to oversee the plant until the NRC determines that Davis-Besse's performance warrants its return to the agency normal reactor oversight program.

At Perry, three issues of low to moderate safety significance identified in 2002 and 2003 led to increased oversight by the NRC. In response to the declining performance at the plant, the NRC has stepped up its regulatory scrutiny of Perry, including an in-depth inspection planned for next year to examine equipment problems, safety programs and human performance issues at the plant.

At Beaver Valley, all performance indicators and inspection findings are of very low safety significance, and the plant does not require increased NRC inspection oversight.

Documents related to the performance of Davis-Besse, Perry and Beaver Valley and the NRC oversight of these plants are posted on the NRC's web site at: <http://www.nrc.gov/>

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